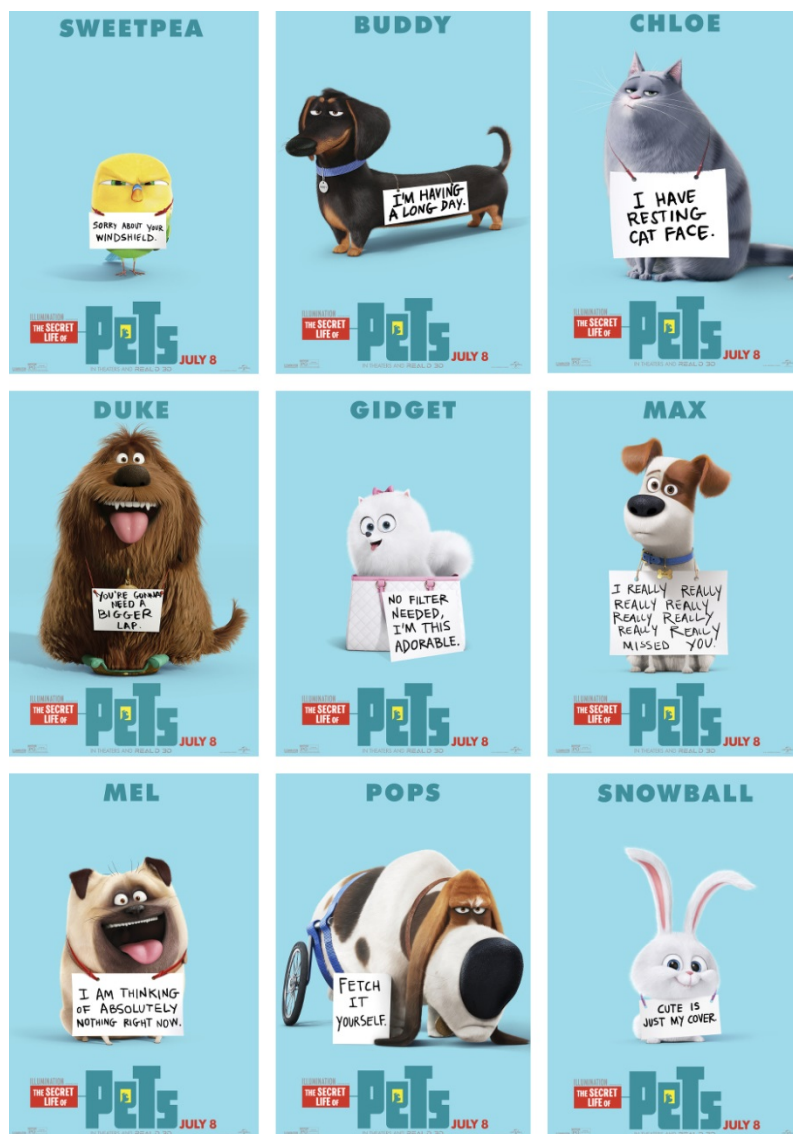


The Secret Life of Pets



The Secret Life of Pets is a joyful adventurous romp along the alleys and streets of a beautifully animated New York City in the Fall when the leaves are spectacular and the city takes on a vibrancy all its own. The adventure begins with glimpses into the lives of the Dogs and Cats in various apartments and other settings when the owners go off to work. Think *Toy Story* but with pets. Everything comes to life and these animals are a great representation of all the characteristics that make us love them. Our main character, Max, is the sole pet of his beloved owner until she brings home the stray from hell named Duke. During a routine walk, they are separated and cornered only to get caught up in a run-for-your-life situation, leaving them to fend for themselves.

When Max gets into the street life, he and his nemesis have to learn how to work together to survive and escape the dangers that threaten them both. This is a good lesson to learn. Embedded in *The Secret Life of Pets* are a lot of important themes and messages that are good reminders to all of us about how we treat one another and what can happen when we mistreat or abandon the creatures who love us. I enjoyed



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following along as they faced danger together and, with the support of their good friends who set out on a hilarious rescue mission, well, you know the ending has to be happy.

The Secret Life of Pets isn't innovative or novel in its approach, but it does leave you smiling and is a good family outing. Somehow the popcorn tasted better as I watched it. The voice actors do a good job and the message is to appreciate what you have at home and learn to share it lest you find yourself living near a trash container or worse.

This is a good matinee movie or rental. You won't be disappointed. I give *The Secret Life of Pets* three golden tickets. **And don't forget, the Voice Awards are Wednesday August 10th. If you haven't been, it is a great annual event that honors positive portrayals of persons with mental disorders in film and television. Register to attend here: <https://www.regonline.com/2016VoiceAwards>.**

